

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 386 027

FL 023 177

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TITLE Writing and Audio Cassette Evaluations: Enhancing Language Acquisition and Writing Skills for ESL Students.
PUB DATE Mar 95
NOTE 6p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Conference on College Composition and Communication (46th, Washington, DC, March 23-25, 1995).
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Audiovisual Instruction; *English (Second Language); Feedback; Higher Education; Instructional Materials; Learning Processes; Second Language Instruction; Second Language Learning; *Student Evaluation; Teacher Response; *Writing Evaluation; Writing Skills

ABSTRACT

This paper outlines the 4-tiered evaluation and classroom practices of one English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) teacher related to writing abilities that involve the use of audiocassettes that integrate writing, reading, speaking, and listening from pre-writing to teacher evaluation and student remediation. Daily instruction includes writing, reading, speaking, and listening cognates; this provides students with sequential, consistent, formative feedback. This feedback is presented in the same way that students are instructed, thus it reinforces the relationship between teacher expectation and student achievement. Every writing assignment includes an audio cassette of the student reading the assignment. Evaluation is based on the audiocassette reading and the writing. Feedback is given on the paper, by return cassette comment recording, and by a corrected, teacher reading of the written paper; some corrections are noted on the teacher reading that were not noted on the paper copy. Objectives, disadvantages, and advantages of the system are listed separately. (Contains 4 references.) (NAV)

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Writing and Audio Cassette Evaluations: Enhancing Language Acquisition and Writing Skills for ESL Students

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WRITING AND AUDIO CASSETTE EVALUATIONS:
ENHANCING LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND WRITING SKILLS FOR ESL
STUDENTS

by

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SUMMARY

In an attempt to increase literacy rates of English as a Second Language students and to maximize learning for ESL students, I align daily instruction to the four cognitive areas of language acquisition: writing, reading, speaking, and listening. I use these four cognates as instructional guides and to evaluate student writing. This evaluative methodology provides ESL students with sequential, consistent formative feedback, presented through the same methods as they receive instruction, thus reinforcing the relationship between teacher expectation and student achievement. The use of media technology, audio cassettes, by students during the writing process, and by me as a component of evaluation, makes possible the integration of writing, reading, speaking, and listening from pre-writing to evaluation, and finally to student self-remediation. Every essay assignment submitted for a grade includes the final draft, prewriting and rough draft guides, revision workshop guides, rough draft, and a cassette recording of the student reading his or her own essay. This format challenges the underlying theories of

traditional ESL writing courses by insuring integration of the four cognates, and each interrelated cognitive area reinforces skills inherent in the others. When ESL students practice English in this four-tiered instructional domain, their language acquisition and writing skills improve at maximal rates.

For evaluation, I first listen to the student's recorded reading of the essay. Then I evaluate the student writing, using a six-trait rubric to assess proficiency. During this phase, I sometimes model sentence corrections, but often I mark problem sentences or passages with no modeled suggestions written on the text. In the final phase of evaluation, I record a message on the student's cassette which acknowledges an area or two well done in the writing and identifies one or two specific areas the student must address. Then I read the student's essay onto the cassette, reading the text with the corrections necessary for overall improvement of the piece. Some of the corrections students hear me read on their cassettes are written on their drafts; others are not. That means students must listen actively to my reading of their work, making notes on their drafts where necessary.

By using audio cassettes to facilitate this four-tiered learning domain, and as part of my evaluation of student writing, I reinforce the main structure of my ESL class: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. More importantly, multiple levels of language acquisition are

enhanced in the frame of a writing class that is really much more than a writing class.

OBJECTIVES

- * increase rate of language acquisition
- * reinforce foundational L2 training by aligning four cognitive areas of language acquisition to daily class activities
- * provide ESL students with sequential, consistent formative feedback
- * use an evaluative model that reinforces the relationship between teacher expectation and student achievement
- * train students to identify patterns of error, and to anticipate and eliminate those patterns, learning-strategies necessary for effective remediation and to engage students' long-term memory

DISADVANTAGES

- * increased time needed to assess each paper
- * number of writings reduced to accommodate expanded analysis method (1 essay every 2 weeks instead of 1 every week)

ADVANTAGES

- * increased rate of skill improvements
- * consistent reinforcement of four cognates of language acquisition
- * increased L2 fluency in all four areas of language use: speaking, listening, reading, writing
- * increased effectiveness of remediation, with the focus on student self-remediation

RESOURCES

Karant, Priscilla. Grammar Through Stories. New York: St. Martin's, 1994.

Sebranek, Patrick, et al. Writer's Inc. Burlington: Write Source, 1990.

Spandel, Vicki and Ruth Culham. The Six-Trait Analytical

Model for Assessing Writing. Beverton: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1986.

Spandel, Vicki and Richard J. Stiggins. Creating Writers: Linking Assessment and Writing Instruction. New York: Longman, 1990.

SIX-TRAIT ANALYTICAL RUBRIC

Criterion: Ideas and Content
 Organization and Development
 Voice/ Tone
 Word Choice/ Diction
 Sentence Fluency/ Syntax
 Conventions/ Grammar

Scoring Grid*

Paper #: _____

	1	2	3	4	5
Idea Development					
Organization					
Voice					
Word Choice					
Sentence Fluency					
Conventions					
	(1) Prewriting/ Searching	(2) Rudimentary	(3) Developing	(4) Maturing	(5) In control on this trait